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ABSTRACT

This literature review seeks to provide an assessment of the current status of formal, institution-wide planning in higher education. It offers an overview of the roots and assumptions underlying the conduct of planning; summarizes higher education's experience with formal planning; and offers insights into factors that may limit its effectiveness, including the nature of the organizational contexts within which planning takes place and the problems involved in predicting critical events affecting institutional well-being. The review examines basic world views that affect perceptions of the feasibility of planning and describes implications that various theories of organizational behavior hold for planning. It traces the development of formal planning concepts, and examines literature regarding the feasibility of planning from both theoretical and practical perspectives. A series of conclusions and implications are presented, which answer such questions as "can planning help reconcile the need for collective action with the values of professional autonomy?" and "should planning approaches vary according to institutional circumstances?" Approximately 120 references are appended. (JDD)

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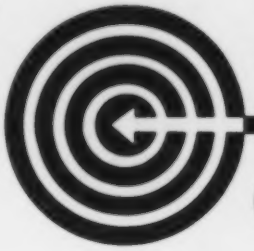

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A REVIEW OF LITERATURE ON HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONAL PLANNING

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A REVIEW OF LITERATURE ON HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONAL PLANNING

Introduction

During the past 25 years, interest in institutional planning in higher education has grown tremendously. There has been a great proliferation of books, journal articles and workshops on higher education planning. Sessions about higher education planning are conducted at nearly every association meeting concerned with higher education governance and management. An association specifically concerned with higher education planning, the Society for College and University Planning, was formed in 1966 (Holmes, 1985). This association has been steadily increasing its membership and publishes its own journal (Planning for Higher Education). Numerous consultants are employed to advise colleges and universities on the design and conduct of their planning processes.

Although higher education institutions are spending considerable time and money on planning, the evidence increasingly suggests that they frequently do not get the returns expected from these efforts. Nevertheless, consultants and proponents at conferences in the higher management literature continue to recommend that higher education institutions expand their formal planning efforts. This situation often results in considerable frustration for practitioners as they try to adopt planning methods based on theoretical concepts rather than on practical experience. Consequently, this review of that literature seeks to provide an assessment of the current status of formal, institution-wide planning in higher education. It summarizes higher education's experience with formal planning and offers insights into factors that may limit its effectiveness, including the nature of the organizational contexts within which planning takes place, and the problems involved in predicting critical events affecting institutional well-being. The review is particularly designed to give practitioners a brief overview of the roots and assumptions underlying the conduct of planning.

For the purposes of this review, planning is defined as the activities colleges and universities formally undertake to

determine their basic character and future courses of action. No attempt is made to consider specialized types of planning such as facility, library, computer or affirmative action planning. Even with this exclusion, literature on organization-wide planning in general, and on higher education planning in particular, is too extensive and diffuse to be adequately addressed in any one review. Furthermore, as noted by Sork and Buskey (1986) in their analysis of program planning literature, "the literature is diffuse, lacks integration, and is devoid of efforts to build upon, elaborate or otherwise improve and expand existing formulations and perspectives."

Consequently, this review is highly selective. It does not systematically examine the various types of planning processes advocated in the literature or compare their relative merits. The character of various planning process designs has been described and compared by authors such as Benveniste (1972), Peterson (1980), Hudson (1983) and van Vught (1988) and many books and articles provide guidelines for implementing particular planning procedures including Keller (1983), Shirley (1983), Haas (1980) and Norris and Poulton (1987). This review specifically is designed to focus on particular topics that can contribute to a richer understanding of planning, rather than on a summary of particular approaches. Many authors have made valuable observations on these topics. To maintain the cohesiveness of this review, some judgment and selectivity necessarily had to be exercised over which observations were most relevant to its purposes. Consequently, the contributions of some authors to this literature undoubtedly have been neglected or insufficiently emphasized.

The review briefly examines some basic world views that affect perceptions of the feasibility of planning and describes implications various theories of organizational behavior hold for planning. It then traces the development of formal planning concepts and reviews literature describing higher education's experiences with planning. It then examines literature regarding the feasibility of planning, both from theoretical and practical perspectives. Finally, a series of conclusions and implications are presented. Appended to the review is an extensive set of references to selected literature on the organizational context of planning, general literature on planning, and literature on higher education planning.

Assumptions Underlying the Concept of Planning

The concept of planning is based on a set of philosophical assumptions about the character of the world. Planning assumes a world, susceptible to scientific inquiry, that operates according to principles of cause and effect (Mandelbaum 1979). A planner views the world as a network of interacting events in which certain events cause other events to occur according to

principles that, at least in theory, are discoverable and understandable. This set of assumptions, which can be characterized as a "scientific perspective," are by no means universally accepted.

Differing World Views

Some examples of world views that are incompatible with the "scientific" perspective are briefly described in this section (Schmidtlein 1973, pp. 4-6).

A World of Random or Unpredictable Events. Analysis and control of events is impossible if phenomena behave in random ways. Cause-and-effect relationships cannot be discovered and controlled. Generalizations cannot be deduced from one set of circumstances to another. One must be content with accepting life as it comes and making peace with whatever circumstances arise.

A World Governed by Metaphysical Forces. Analysis is useless or illegitimate if it involves tinkering with the workings of some divine providence that is located outside the physical world known to humans. If this god, spirit, or other metaphysical force is capricious, people can seek to control their environment through activities such as prayer, offerings, reading signs and doing rain dances that influence and/or interpret the ways of the "god(s)." Scientific analysis, technological intervention and self-directed activity may conflict with the desires and rules of the gods and invite reprisal. Even if the metaphysical forces ordain a predictable world that is subject to understanding and control, within the limits of metaphysical laws, one risks violating these laws if free will is exercised unwisely. The task of analysis is to discover the externally ordained laws of the universe and to regulate activities in accordance with these laws. Less importance is attached to discovering whether these laws conflict with the characteristics of observed reality, because failure of observed events to follow these laws may be the result of evil forces, human weaknesses or inaccurate perceptions of the law.

A World of Impressionistic Values. Analysis is illegitimate and dysfunctional if the true values of life result from perceptions of events as totalities. An event is viewed as being more than the sum of its parts, and too great an emphasis on the parts can destroy one's appreciation of the whole. Understanding should not be sought, only appreciation and sensation. After all, an adherent to this perspective would argue, Why would one wish to analyze and measure the pleasures of viewing a sunset or of falling in love? These kinds of sensations are the most important things in life and the very act of analysis destroys such sensations. These sentiments were echoed by Duke Ellington

in a 1973 interview with a journalist from the San Francisco Chronicle:

> I don't understand this craze to know how everything works. People want to know how I do it, or they say they want to get behind the scenes. Why should the audience ever be behind the scenes? All it does is pull the petals off the creative flower.

A Predictable Inanimate World Inhabited by Unpredictable Humans. Analysis and control of the inanimate world is possible because objects do not analyze events and make judgments on alternative behaviors. Humans, however, do interpret events and react in complex ways that are unsusceptible to prediction and control. Analysis, therefore, is possible in the inanimate world but not in the psychological and social worlds of humans. Social science, consequently, is impossible both in principle and in practice.

Benveniste (1972) described the predilection of planners to base their analyses on a particular, and incomplete, theory of human behavior:

> When experts make plans, they often adopt the posture of "realists." Reality in this context is "hard-nosed" reality; it usually involves a simplified image of [man], say "economic" [man] or "exchange and power" [man]. Since planners still think they are agents of efficiency instead of inventors of the future, their calculus of rationality reflects theories of behavior that are necessarily simplified ... In planning, this results in downgrading certain concepts such as aesthetic norms, love, or even ideologies ... The social edifice is gradually built on limited assumptions, and, increasingly, a limited and possibly quite unattractive social world is created" (pp. 188-189).

As this quote illustrates, even an acceptance of the basic assumptions underlying the scientific perspective does not necessarily lead to common views of the character of reality and, consequently, of the nature of planning. Within the broad world views that are compatible with the canons of science, many models of reality are created to explain various phenomena. These abstract concepts of reality vary across many dimensions in terms of such attributes as comprehensiveness, specificity, logical consistency and congruence with empirical observations. The models of reality that guide particular areas of scientific inquiry commonly are termed the "paradigms of science" (Kuhn 1962). Although modern planning theorists argue over particular concepts utilized to describe reality, most accept the

"scientific" perspective. Assessments of the literature in this review proceed from that set of assumptions.

Differing Organizational Theories

In addition to broad world views, planning concepts are based on social science theories that attempt to explain the behavior of organizations. Salner (1971) and Larson (1985) traced the history of some of the philosophic views that lie behind modern notions of planning. March (1982) and Peterson (1985) described a number of theories of organizational behavior. Peterson characterized these theories as fragmented and needing integration into a more comprehensive and less contradictory set of propositions. Cope (1987) listed five organizational models that have been used to describe the character of colleges and universities.

The Collegial Model (Millett 1978). Assumes a collegium of scholars participating fully in decisionmaking.

The Bureaucratic Model (Weber 1947). Gives more attention to a formal organizational structure, with roles, predetermined regulations and set procedures.

The Political Model (Baldridge 1971). Assumes that a conflict of goals, values, and preferences is present and natural. Decisions are based on negotiated compromises arrived at informally and verified through the formal organizational processes.

The Organized Anarchy Model (Cohen and March 1974). Sees the institution, because of ambiguous goals, systems of rewards and market connectiveness as unable to manage itself rationally.

The Rational Model (Allison, 1971). Sees opportunities for strategic choices that are logically determined by using management information systems, environmental scanning and similar techniques borrowed from industry.

Birnbaum (1988) has added to this list a "cybernetic" model. His model seeks to integrate features of the aforementioned models into a broader theory of organizational behavior. The cybernetic model views organizations as consisting of horizontal and vertical "feedback loops" that provide information to control behavior through means such as interaction, group pressures, self-discipline, internalized commitments, prescribed patterns of communication, external directives and availability of sanctions. These feedback loops function much in the same self-correcting way as a thermostat does. When information suggests that a situation is inconsistent with established norms, corrections are made in various locations to restore the system's equilibrium.

There are numerous other "models" in the literature describing particular aspects of organizational behavior.

Clearly, theories as different as Cohen and March's "garbage can" theory of organizational decisionmaking and Baldridge's concepts of political decisionmaking imply different approaches to planning than does Weber's concept of a bureaucracy or Allison's description of "rational" decision processes. These competing conceptions of organizational behavior and decision-making suggest that those assessing planning should be sensitive to the underlying organizational assumptions that shape their views. Are differing assessments of planning rooted in conflicting world views and organizational theories or are they based on common assumptions but differing interpretations of evidence? Each of these bases for disagreement about the potential for planning have profoundly different implications for attempts to design effective processes.

Development of Formal Planning Concepts

The debates over higher education planning have their roots in a historic argument about appropriate and effective modes of societal decisionmaking.

Origins of Planning Concepts

The concept of planning, in its modern form, grew out of social philosophers seeking solutions to problems apparent in the formulations of collective decisionmaking put forth by liberal philosophers, such as Adam Smith and John Stuart Mills. Marx (1907) described social consequences he thought would emerge from the growth of unregulated market economies, and suggested the need for formal social intervention. Aside from the Marxists, Mannheim (1950) presented one of the most ambitious attempts to formulate concepts of planning. He aptly described the fundamental assumptions underlying the modern impetus to engage in planning:

> We have never had to set up and direct the entire system of nature as we are forced to do today with society.... Mankind is tending more and more to regulate the whole of its social life, although it has never attempted to create a second nature (p. 175).

Philosophies of science, particularly logical positivism, provided a rationale, and scientific breakthroughs set humans' precedents, for man's belief in the possibilities of intervening into "the entire system of nature." Science also furnished technologies needed to conduct planning (Salner 1971).

Until the post-World War II period, concepts of public planning had little ideological support in this country.

Planning was linked closely in the public's mind with concepts possessing negative connotations, such as socialism and authoritarianism (Hayek 1944; Jewkes 1948). During the past 50 years, planning has gained considerable legitimacy among both progressives and conservatives. Galbraith (1967), a liberal economist, made a case for planning in modern industrial society and Richard Nixon, a conservative president, utilized extensive economic controls over prices. During the Reagan presidency, marketplace notions of decisionmaking regained some of their earlier stature and extensive efforts were made to deregulate economic activities. At the same time, however, notions of strategic planning were being promoted vigorously in both the private and public sectors. Many of the laws establishing both domestic and international social programs, passed by the Congress since the 1960s, required planning as a condition for participation.

Growth of Interest in Higher Education Planning

During the past 30 years, planning has received increasing attention from a broad spectrum of higher education administrators and scholars. The growth in state-wide higher education coordination and planning has been described by Glenny (1959) and Berdahl (1971). Balderston and Weathersby (1972) noted the interest higher education exhibited in Program-Planning-Budgeting Systems soon after these systems were introduced in the Department of Defense. The National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (NCHEMS) was created in 1970 to assist institutions by developing technical tools supporting their planning. Lee and Bowen (1971) stated that planning, the promotion of intentional change, is "one of the most frequently given reasons for the establishment and continued existence of the multicampus university" (p. 215). Schuck (1977) suggested that planning is the new "religion" of higher education. According to Mayhew (1980), planning has become "perhaps the most widely urged activity for collegiate administrators to undertake" (p. 111).

Norris and Poulton (1987) described four "eras" in the development of higher education planning. During the 1950s, planning was relatively unsophisticated with continued reliance on traditional modes of governance. In the 1960s, great emphasis was placed on developing quantitative planning techniques. Attention was given to developing physical master plans, experimenting with management science techniques, creating institutional research and planning capabilities and creating state system plans. The 1970s saw the pragmatic application of planning concepts and techniques with the creation of comprehensive master plans, experimentation with program planning and evaluation techniques, resource reallocation and retrenchment and growth of planning as a staff function. The 1980s were viewed as the era of strategic redirection. Strategic planning

gained popularity and there were selective focuses on new clientele, new partnerships and external relationships. Experiences with the shortcomings of analysis and planning began to gain attention and the emphases shifted toward applications rather than techniques. Planning increasingly was viewed as a line function, dispersed through the organization.

Reasons for Interest in Planning

Schmidtlein (1979), speculating on reasons for the growth of interest in higher education planning, suggested five possible factors (p. 31):

- The growth in the size and complexity of higher education.
- The rapid rate of change in society and higher education.
- 0 The "success" of science in explaining complex phenomena.
- The development and elaboration of technologies needed to plan.
- Shortcomings perceived in the operations of the political marketplace.

Cope (1987), commenting on the growing institutional interest in strategic planning in the 1980s, listed five additional reasons:

- Many institutions seemed to have no clear vision of their mission, no mission, or--at best--an unclear mission.
- The environment was quite turbulent: High school enrollments were decreasing, new technologies were appearing, and competing colleges were adopting new techniques of marketing.
- Too much attention was given to short-term, internally focused problems and issues.
- Too often institutional performance was largely based on "bottom line" standards--test scores, the number of students, the size of the endowment and so on.
- At many institutions, little connection existed between the campus master plan, the enrollment plan and the budget plan.

Wildavsky (1973) suggested that humans seek means to reduce uncertainties about future conditions and grasp onto planning as a means to do so "--it has become a kind of secular faith", Benveniste (1972) believed

> there is no single explanation for the emergence of planners. Moreover, the factors that bring them about are not necessarily those that keep them functioning. The empirical evidence suggests that in some instances the emergence of planning is related to the inability of organizations or entire governments to function in an environment that has become too uncertain (p. 24).

Review of Higher Education Planning Experiences

Before the 1960s, planning was viewed with considerable suspicion in the United States. As it began to be generally accepted in society, however, higher education quickly began to adopt contemporary practices. In the 1960s, highly structured planning was emphasized. Then, as problems emerged, strategic planning was advocated as an approach that would overcome shortcomings of past practices. The following brief review and analysis of higher education planning experiences suggest some of the difficulties and complexities involved in designing effective planning approaches for academic institutions.

Changing Perceptions of the Legitimacy of Planning

Historically, planning and management have not had well-understood or well-respected roles in higher education and often have been viewed as inconsistent with traditional values and mores of the academic community (Eble 1979; Allen and Chaffee 1981). The relatively recent changes in the higher education community's attitudes toward formal planning and management processes appear to stem largely from fears that changing demographic, economic and social conditions would adversely affect the size and quality of the American postsecondary enterprise (Weathersby 1972; Copa 1983). In the late 1960s and early 1970s, it became increasingly apparent that the final decades of the 20th century were likely to be characterized by a declining population of traditional college-age students, increasing competition for fiscal resources and wavering public confidence in higher education (Mortimer and Tierney 1979). In their search for ways to avoid, or at least ameliorate, the potentially negative impacts of these trends, many higher education professionals began to advocate adopting the planning and management practices of government and business (Lahti 1973; Klapstein 1978).

Early Approaches to Higher Education Planning

NCHEMS, with the support of the federal government, attempted to develop tools and techniques that would encourage and assist higher education institutions to implement more quantitatively based approaches to planning and management (Lawrence and Service 1977). Additionally, large projects designed to facilitate more extensive use of management information systems and formal planning models were funded by the Exxon Foundation (Resource Allocation Management Program) and the Ford Foundation (Ford Foundation Program for Research in University Administration) (Poulton 1980).

In a relatively short time, higher education tried a number of different planning approaches (Baldridge and Okimini 1982). These include computer-assisted models that emphasized quantitative analyses, projections and simulations (that is, CAMPUS, RRPM, TRADES, SEARCH); highly structured planning/ management techniques (management by objectives, zero-based budgeting, and planning, programming, budgeting system); and goal-oriented master plan development processes. Frequently, as institutions attempted to implement these approaches, they encountered skepticism and resistance from various institutional constituencies and/or they found that they did not have sufficient time or resources to apply the specified models to their unique organizational settings (Wiseman 1979; Tack and Resau 1982). Often, even when plans were developed and apparently accepted, they became "shelf" documents, whose usefulness was restricted to presentations to visiting accreditation teams and other external evaluators (Ringle and Savickes 1983).

Analyses of Problems Encountered in Early Planning Initiatives

The most frequently cited reasons for the difficulties that most colleges and universities experienced in their efforts to implement early planning models dealt with a lack of fit between the assumptions underlying the planning models and the operational realities of academic institutions (Allen and Chaffee 1981; Baldridge and Okimini 1982; Gillis 1982; Keller 1983). The planning approaches that many institutions tried to use in the late 1960s and 1970s were developed largely in business and government settings and were based primarily on assumptions that organizations function in accordance with traditional concepts of rationality and bureaucratic governance (Peterson 1980; Schmidtlein 1983). These "rational" models assumed that organizational goals exist and can be specified, alternative courses of action can be identified and evaluated with respect to their potential for furthering goal achievement, decisions as to which courses of action to follow can be reached using logic and analytic procedures and implementation of the decisions made

through planning activities is feasible and likely to occur (Hudson 1983; Mahoney 1983).

Contemporary organizational behavior theories, however, suggest that the functioning of academic institutions is considerably different, and far more complex, than these concepts imply and, in fact, reflects a varying mixture of political, structural, environmental and psychological dynamics (Cohen and March 1974; Baldridge et al. 1978). They describe colleges and universities as loosely coupled, open systems with multiple and poorly defined goals, unclear links between means and ends, political decisionmaking processes and relatively autonomous, professionally staffed subunits that often cannot or will not carry out activities suggested, or even mandated, by institutional-level administrators (Etzioni 1964; Cohen and March 1974; Weick 1976; Baldridge et al., 1978; Katz and Kahn, 1978). Benveniste (1972), examining some of these problems, noted that

> the more uncertainty there is, the more we hear a call for centralized and comprehensive planning, as if the deficiencies of laissez-faire could be remedied by adopting planning practices that fit totally different social systems (p. 194).

As the criticisms of early planning efforts began to mount, strategic planning, an approach that was developed in the business sector in the mid-1960s (Keller 1983), began to dominate both the scholarly and practitioner-oriented literature on the subject (Miller 1983).

Strategic Planning

Since the late 1970s and early 1980s, the most frequently advocated approach to higher education planning and management is strategic planning. According to Robert Cope (1981), one of the early proponents of its use in higher education, strategic planning is

> an open systems approach to steering an enterprise over time through uncertain environmental waters. It is a proactive problem-solving behavior directed externally at conditions in the environment and a means to find a favorable competitive position in the continual competition for resources. Its purpose is to achieve success with mission while linking the institution's future to anticipated changes in the environment in such a way that the acquisition of resources (money, personnel, staff, students, good will) is faster than the depletion of resources (p. 3).

Basically, strategic planning involves scanning the external environment for possible threats and opportunities, assessing

internal strengths and weaknesses and then, based on a comparative analysis of this external and internal information, identifying major directions that will promote institutional health and viability. These directions are intended to serve as guidelines for key organizational actors and subunits to use in decisionmaking and program development (Cope 1981; Baldridge and Okimini 1982; Keller 1983).

The most distinctive feature of strategic planning is its focus on the external environment. Cyert (1981) suggested this external focus should be guided by two principles: the concepts of comparative advantage and the niche. The primary purpose of institutional planning is viewed as enhancing institutional adaptation to external conditions brought about by today's rapidly changing environment. The need for rapid, effective adaptation to environmental change is often cited as the principal reason why higher education should initiate deliberate strategic planning efforts. Careful assessments of external trends, and their implications for an institution, are considered as essential to successful institutional performance as are data bases that describe internal characteristics and operations. Furthermore, increased institutional flexibility, because it allows for changes of direction as new external information or new situations emerge, frequently is discussed as an important outcome of strategic planning (Cope 1981; Kotler and Murphy 1981; Keller 1983). Cyert (1988) emphasized the need for flexibility, noting that planning is crucial but should not prevent an organization from being opportunistic: "One cannot go to sleep between planning periods" (p. 95).

According to many of its proponents, a second distinctive feature of strategic planning is its emphasis on the integration of planning and operational decisionmaking. Strategic planning generally is described as a responsibility of line administrators, and the commitment and active participation of key administrators is considered an essential first step for its effective implementation (Keller 1983). Baldridge and Okimini (1982) asserted that, through active involvement in strategic planning, key organizational actors will learn to form "today's decisions with regard to their future impact" (p. 17).

More specifically, guidelines for the implementation of strategic planning usually include the following five steps: (1) reviewing the institution's mission, role and scope; (2) determining internal strengths and weaknesses, both academic and financial; (3) analyzing external developments and trends (including the demographic, political, economic, technological, cultural, market, public and competitive environments) to identify potential institutional threats, opportunities and markets; (4) identifying areas of competitive advantage and disadvantage; and (5) developing specific institutional strategies (Shirley and Volkwein 1978; Cope 1981; Kotler and

Murphy 1981; Keller 1983; Myran 1983). However, institutions generally are advised to consider their "own situation and devise a tailored process" (Keller 1983, p. 165) for accomplishing each of these critical strategic planning components. Additionally, most strategic planning advocates strongly emphasize the importance top leadership commitment and involvement has for effectively implementing strategic plans. However, there is disagreement as to whether a "bottoms up," "top down," or "mixed" approach is preferable (Cope 1981; Baldridge and Okimini 1982). Benveniste (1972) suggested that

> there is no intrinsic reason why planning should be either centralized or decentralized. These forms differ to fit the administrative culture and distribution of power in each country or organization (p. 90).

Analysis of the Potential Usefulness of Strategic Planning. There is little empirical research either to support or to refute claims regarding strategic planning's potential usefulness in colleges and universities. However, serious questions have been raised about the validity of available supportive evidence. Miller (1983) contended that Keller's (1983) descriptions of successful strategic planning efforts are "largely anecdotal" (p. 46) and do not provide the systematic data and sound analysis required to assess the strengths and weaknesses of strategic planning. Additionally, Peterson (1984) asserted that Keller's "case studies are vignettes ... selected as successful examples; however, many other institutions have attempted to do strategic planning and have been frustrated. The definitive study of the effectiveness of strategic planning has yet to be done" (p. 664). Cyert (1985) noted that "strategic planning is generally difficult to do within universities, but it becomes more difficult during a period of contraction because certain functions may have to be eliminated" (p. 116).

Cope (1987) suggested that both conceptual and pragmatic confusion has blunted the potential value of the strategic concept. He pointed out distinctions between <u>institutional strategies</u> that match environmental opportunities with internal strengths; <u>campus-wide functional strategies</u> that deal with the specifics of finances, human resources, enrollment and facilities to achieve the larger strategy; <u>program strategies</u>, which are academic department plans; and <u>program-level function strategies</u>, which are specific plans for admissions, curriculum, staffing and budget. He believed failures to recognize these distinctions have harmed institutional planning. He further suggested that a careful distinction needs to be made between "where" an institution is going and "how" it goes in the desired direction. The "where" is whether the institution is doing the "right thing" and the "how" is whether it is "doing things right."

A number of authors, including several strategic planning advocates, have expressed concerns about the fit between basic strategic planning concepts and processes and the characteristics and values of the academic setting. Allen and Chaffee (1981) pointed out that because strategic planning was developed in the corporate sector, it includes concepts that are not clearly related to the higher education setting and suggested that, like the "rational" planning models that were previously tried in higher education, it assumes that "unitary decisions can be made centrally" (p. 24). Even more critically, Fincher (1982) asserted that strategic planning is not new and is, in fact, merely a reformulation of traditional long-range planning. Horner (1979) contended that the emphasis on economic opportunities that is critical in business-oriented strategic planning models is unrealistic in academic institutions and that political considerations may be more crucial. He proposed testing the political feasibility of each potential opportunity by assessing the position, power and salience of supporting and opposing constituencies. Kotler and Murphy (1981) noted that often in higher education "growth opportunities are limited because of the need to satisfy internal constituents" (p. 486). Cope (1978) pointed out the complexities and the inexactness of environmental forecasting for higher education institutions, particularly in times of rapid change. More generally, Eadie (1982) suggested that strategic planning may be "so complex and so difficult to bring off successfully that it may make the best of sense to take an incremental approach to the testing of strategic planning, to apply it in a limited way at first ... and expand its application over a period of years" (pp. 40 and 42).

Despite these criticisms and concerns, at least two factors suggest that there is likely to be a continuing interest in trying to apply strategic planning in a broad spectrum of colleges and universities. First, the demographic and economic uncertainties that initiated the recent interest in higher education planning are likely to persist over the next few years. Second, strategic planning continues to be widely discussed and advocated in much of the practitioner oriented literature, and more and more institutions are establishing processes labeled strategic planning. Miller (1983) suggested that, for administrators with little time to read, Keller's (1983) book Academic Strategy may become a "surrogate" for other literature because of its lively and easily understandable writing style. Additionally, Alfred (1985) asserted that Strategic Management in the Community College, a 1983 issue in the Jossey-Bass New Directions for Community College series, "should be required reading for mid-level and executive-level community college administrators, including academic department heads" (p. 22).

Concerns About Planning Effectiveness

Despite the recent widespread acceptance of the importance of planning for higher education institutions, there is considerable agreement that attempts to apply formal planning methods in the academic environment frequently have been disappointing and ineffective (Baldridge and Okimini 1982; Keller 1983). The literature offers a number of both theoretical and practical reasons for this state of affairs.

Theoretical Critiques of Planning

Wildavsky (1973) asserted that planning has not measured up to expectations in nearly all cases. One cannot point to a good example of successful national planning. As a result, he posed the question, "Suppose planning as presently constituted cannot work in the environment in which it is supposed to function?" He suggested that the answer to this question may be that planning does not work and gave the following reasons:

- Formal planning is only a small part of what could be called planning because "practically all actions with future consequences are planned actions, planning is everything, and nonplanning can hardly be said to exist."

- There is a lack of causal knowledge about the areas subject to planning and consequently little helpful theory. Where theories exist there is little knowledge on how they can be applied.

- There is no "rational" way to determine goals and policies. Differences have to be settled by the exercise of political power.

- Planning can be very expensive.

He concluded that the reason formal planning continues to exist, despite evidence it is not very successful, is because it has become a kind of secular faith.

> Planning concerns man's efforts to make the future in his own image (p.151). The greater his need, the more man longs to believe in the reality of his vision. Since he can only create the future he desires on paper he transfers his loyalties to the plan. Since the end is never in sight he sanctifies the journey: the process of planning becomes holy (pp. 15 and 152).

Benveniste (1972) noted that

> since 1945, more than twelve hundred national development plans have been elaborated, over one hundred twenty-five central planning offices have been established in both rich and poor countries, and around a hundred specialized training centers give courses in national and regional planning. Yet with twenty-five years of experience behind them, national planners talk more about failures than about successes (p. 14).

He further observed,

> As it turns out, systematic, comprehensive planning does not always solve these problems; indeed, it sometimes accentuates them. Insistence on performance, accountability, efficiency, and rationality does not always fit the realities of organizations. Sometimes they result in goal conflict and goal displacement. The more exactly goals are specified, the more difficult it is to reach agreement about them. Moreover, measurements themselves can become the new goals and displace what they are supposed to measure (pp. 9-10).

Mandelbaum (1979) argued that a complete general theory of planning is impossible. He noted that, "despite the mantle of science drawn around the field, we 'know' a great deal more about how planners should behave to satisfy various procedural criteria, than about what happens when they behave in any particular way." Factors that impede development of a theory of planning include the following:

- Planning pervades most organizational activities. ("If everyone plans--at the time--then the domain of a theory of planning is barely distinguishable from the ocean of social and behavioral sciences") (p. 64).

- People react to plans in complex and unexpected ways, making predictions hazardous (and theories complex).

- The sets of variables a planning theory must encompass are nearly infinite, defying analysis.

Etzioni (1967), Dahrendorf (1968), Benveniste (1972) and Schmidtlein (1973) contrasted assumptions underlying planning with those underlying "marketplace" approaches to decision-making, and suggested the marketplace model of decisionmaking embodies values and recognizes constraints that make it a more appropriate and accurate model for most organizational decision-making, than does the tenets of formal planning. They suggested most decisionmaking reflects a blend of elements from marketplace

and planning processes. Benveniste (1972) noted the political benefits of marketplace decision processes:

> When the market economy is no longer left to the hazards of individual choice because individual decisions conflict with a collective goal, other forms of resource allocation are instituted. The political cost of making these allocations is high. We forget that market mechanisms (the exchange of goods in the marketplace, which sets prices and, therefore, the allocation of resources among competing claims) are inexpensive politically, because they dictate who gets what without having to explain why (p. 35).

Lindbolm (1968) and Wildavsky (1964) described the character of incremental decisionmaking and suggested this approach better describes how decisions are made in practice than do the concepts of formal planning and analysis.

Difficulties Experienced in Practice

As noted by Lelong and Shirley (1984), "To date, higher education planning is better known for its weaknesses and lack of impact than for its strengths and positive contributions" (p. 4). Roach (1988) observed,

> There are many obstacles to planning in higher education. Former University of California-Berkeley Chancellor Clark Kerr once observed, "There are two reasons why presidents don't like to plan. First, faculty don't like to plan. Second, presidents, by nature, are not masochistic." Further, planning involves assessment, which tends to make people uncomfortable. Beyond that, when resources are scarce, planning implies a reallocation, with some programs losing and others gaining. It is thus not surprising that strategic planning expert George Keller concluded that planning "does not take very well" in an already successful situation. Rather, a real or perceived external threat, new opportunities, or an ambition for greatness seem to be requisites for gaining support for strategic planning in higher education ... Put another way, strategic planning involves change, which threatens an institution's culture. Presidents and others contemplating strategic planning need to be aware of another hazard, too. This is what Rosabeth Moss Kanter calls "the difficult middles." Because change is always disruptive in the short run, there is a tendency for everything to look like a failure at the midway point in a transition when disequilibrium is at it greatest (pp. 62-63).

Problems of Organizational Fit. The premise that, to be effective, planning should be based on an approach that is consistent with basic institutional characteristics is widely accepted in the literature (Peterson 1980; Cope 1981; Baldridge and Okimini 1982; Hudson 1983; Schmidtlein 1983). There must be a fit between the underlying assumptions and implementation requirements of a planning approach and an organization's basic characteristics and problems (Copa 1983; van Vught 1988). These characteristics include values, traditions, governance structure, decisionmaking processes and administrative style, as well as the nature of the issues and problems an institution faces (Peterson 1980). Furthermore, writers note that, to be successful, a planning approach must accommodate institutional time and resource constraints (Benveniste 1972; Schmidtlein 1983) and should not require users to dramatically alter their behaviors (Haas 1980). Cyert (1978) described some of the characteristics of higher education institutions that must be taken into account when designing a planning process:

> Universities by their nature are difficult to manage under the best of conditions. They are decentralized organizations in which college, departments and faculty members are the organizational units. The product is a service that is delivered by a faculty member under conditions that make it wrong for a manager to observe the delivery of the service. The traditions of academic freedom guarantee the inviolability of the classroom. Thus the academic manager--department head, dean provost, president--will discover problems with the delivery of the product only through the complaints of the student, who is paying to receive the service .... The faculty member not only has independence in the classroom but also gains additional independence because he is a source of revenue to the organization through his research efforts. By getting outside grants he pays for part of his salary and part of the overhead expense of the university. If indefinite tenure is added to the other elements of independence, it can be seen that the concept of "managing a faculty member" can be difficult.... Dean and department heads, being faculty members, can have the same independence. In addition, by building good relations with the faculty members in their department or college, the deans and department heads can acquire a political base that gives them some independence for their administrative jobs.... A positive program that is designed to change the attention focus of the faculty from survival to excellence will be most effective when it provides money for faculty to develop an idea (pp. 344 and 347).

In an assessment of the relevance of planning concepts to the characteristics of higher education institutions, van Vught (1988) described some of the fundamental characteristics of higher education institutions including their focus on production of information, the autonomy of basic units, the role of the professionals, the extreme diffusion of decisionmaking, the locus of innovation in the basic units and the location of authority in lower organizational units. He then analyzed the "fit" between these characteristics and 11 different conceptions of planning. He concluded that the fit is best with those conceptions of planning that provide for institutional flexibility and stimulate coherence in emerging actions. These planning conceptions are incremental planning, cybernetic planning, communicative planning and transactive planning, which all recognize the presence of conflicting interests, diffused power and limited knowledge of the area subject to planning.

Participation in Planning. In recognition of these considerations, the literature on higher education planning (Heim 1972; Strohm 1983; Lelong and Shirley 1984; Tack, Rentz and Russell 1984) often stresses the importance of core subunits in colleges and universities (academic departments and divisions) and active participation in institutional planning efforts. For example, Tack et al. (1984) asserted that "commitment to strategic planning must pervade the entire educational organization but it is critical that an effective process be operative in the academic division" (p. 9). Concerns expressed by higher education professionals in discussions of recent experiences with planning and most analyses of the reasons for failures indicate that strategic planning may face its greatest challenges in academic departments or divisions. Cyert (1989) said that it took him five years to get the concepts of strategic planning fully accepted by department chairs at Carnegie-Mellon University, an institution widely acknowledged as one of the most successful examples of utilizing strategic planning to improve quality.

The planning literature identifies a number of factors that may impede institutional efforts to gain faculty and academic program unit commitment to, and participation in, strategic planning. According to Gillis (1982), "most postsecondary institutions ... [are] federated systems ... in which the units within the system (departments, institutes, schools) have seized decisionmaking prerogatives and are relatively independent of other subsystems" (p. 33). Cope (1978) noted that, in colleges and universities, there are "inevitable conflicts between institutional and departmental goals" and that "conflict and competition ... often exists among academic units" (p. 14). Kotler and Murphy (1981) asserted that the values of the "academic culture" are generally inconsistent with one of the underlying concepts of strategic planning, that is, "sensing, serving and satisfying markets" (pp. 486 and 487) and suggested

that faculty may strongly resist presidential attempts to implement activities designed to improve organizational responsiveness to consumer needs and demands. Additionally, Peterson (1980) pointed out that strategic planning processes must address the fact that "different organizational units may have somewhat different resource environments" (p. 144).

Benveniste (1972), in his classic treatment of The Politics of Expertise, suggested that many of the problems encountered in planning result from a lack of understanding of the political role of planners:

> But portions of the bureaucracy are controlled by the Princes's lieutenants, who see the actions of the experts as attempts to meddle in their own affairs. They naturally resist encroachments on their perceived domains. The cries for more power come from experts who fail to perceive the nature of their role and thus oversimplify the problem" (p. 88).

Benveniste, however, also noted,

> A wise expert knows that he may go too far and be too threatening, so he focuses his attention on policy areas where widely shared consensus exists and treats delicate issues cautiously, leaving some of them outside his plans. But the call for goal specification still catches the politicians unprepared. The expert forces the political actors to identify themselves and state their positions as explicitly as possible. Yet while the politicians do this, the expert remains uncommitted. He does not attempt to provide advice since the goals are not clear, and he can attend policy meetings and remain silent while the air clears, waiting to speak until the strongest factions emerge. Meanwhile, the various contending forces begin to show their colors and conflicts erupt (p. 71).

The literature on academic units also suggests that institutional efforts to implement strategic planning may conflict with faculty values and departmental or divisional values and behaviors. The autonomy, the resistance to change, the disciplinary orientations and the self-interested behaviors of academic units have been described by a number of authors (Dressel, Johnson and Marcus 1970; Ikenberry and Freedman 1972; Cohen and March 1974; McHenry and Associates 1977; Cyert, 1988).

In one of the few empirical studies of departments conducted in the past 20 years, Dressel et al. (1970) found that only 15 percent of the faculty chose the university, rather than their discipline or department, as their primary reference group. Additionally, studies of the budgetary process suggest that

departmental power is an important variable in college and university functioning (Wildavsky 1964; Salancik and Pfeffer 1974; Hackman 1983). According to Harrington (1977), departments "have become the major obstacle to change in American colleges and universities" (p. 57).

Strohm (1983), in a recent article in Academe, the publication of the American Association of University Professors (AAUP), clearly revealed major discrepancies between the planning perspectives of strategic planning advocates and those of departmental faculty. Strohm agreed that planning is necessary in today's environment and acknowledged that strategic planning should be an institutional effort rather than primarily a faculty activity. He argued, however, that "academic planning, touching on matters of academic mission, the futures of particular programs, and the deployment of faculty in these programs ... is primarily the responsibility of the faculty of an institution" (p. 11). This position seems to sharply contrast with most descriptions of strategic planning, which emphasize academic program evaluations and academic program changes as core components of institutional strategy development and implementation. Furthermore, Strohm's discussion of the need to base program reviews on a balance of academic and economic factors, rather then primarily on educational considerations as currently recommended by the AAUP, highlights the persistence of traditional academic values and concerns.

The support and cooperation that academic units give to institutional planning efforts is likely to be heavily dependent on the attitudes and behaviors of their heads. Department heads are the primary formal link between both individual faculty and academic departments, as organizational subunits, and institution-wide concerns and regulations. They are major actors in efforts to balance the disciplinary and departmental orientations of faculty and the policies and plans of central administration (Lombardi 1974; Brann and Emmet 1972; Tucker 1980; Booth 1982; Bennett 1983; Simpson 1984). Additionally, their responsibilities (including faculty evaluation, curriculum development and review, budgeting and resource allocation and course and faculty scheduling) provide considerable opportunity for exercising leadership and making decisions that can either foster or hinder the accomplishment of departmental and institutional directions. Thus, department heads are in a critical position to influence the success of any planning process that requires coordinating subunit and institutional-level activities. In strategic planning, with its emphasis on decentralized initiative in developing the specific plans and activities required to carry out overall strategic decisions, department heads' roles and responsibilities, both as key communication links between faculty and administration and as unit managers, may be of even greater significance. By noting that, as part of a successful strategic planning process at a

major university, the president held regular meetings with department chairpersons, Keller (1983) highlighted the important role that academic department heads have in strategic planning.

Generally, the literature on department heads focuses on the conflict and ambiguity inherent in this role, the widespread lack of adequate preparation for its duties and responsibilities and the frequent imbalance between the tasks to be performed and the time and resources available (Brann and Emmet 1972; Wallace 1975; Tucker 1981; Booth 1982; Simpson 1984). In many community colleges, a structure that adds to the complexity of the role of the academic unit manager has evolved. Although the discipline-oriented academic department, which serves as the basic organizational unit of four-year and graduate institutions, has not been totally eliminated, groupings of disciplines, generally similar, have been organized into divisions. The heads of these divisions often assume the basic responsibilities of university department heads as well as some of the broader roles and responsibilities of college deans in large universities (Koehnline and Blocker 1982).

In an empirical study assessing the basic orientation of department heads, Bragg (1980) interviewed chairpersons at Pennsylvania State University and found that 23 out of the 39 had predominantly faculty and/or program orientations. Similarly, the literature intended to assist department chairpersons in performing their roles and functions (Tucker 1980, 1981; Bennett 1983) tends to stress furthering departmental, rather than institutional goals and objectives. Consequently, although the literature on academic department heads does not directly deal with their planning attitudes and behaviors, it suggests that they may be ambivalent toward strategic planning concepts and processes and/or may not be willing or able to implement behaviors that will foster its effective implementation.

Although the strategic planning literature recognizes that department heads have important roles in developing and carrying out strategic decisions (Cope 1981; Baldridge and Okimini 1982; Keller 1983), it does not indicate why or how they are likely to be supportive of such efforts. In fact, there is some evidence that department heads reacted negatively to past efforts to use formal planning processes in colleges and universities and that they often believed that these processes had little impact on the activities and budgets of their units (Baldridge and Tierney 1980; Baldridge and Okimini 1982). Keller (1983) and other strategic planning advocates appear to assume that effective constituency involvement will result from strong presidential leadership. This assumption, however, has been questioned by recent observations and descriptions of the presidential role in higher education institutions (Cohen and March 1974; Kerr 1984; Birnbaum 1988).

Additional evidence that department heads may have some difficulties with strategic planning comes from a report of discussions at a Florida conference (McMillen 1985). At this conference, Keller urged department heads to place increasing emphasis on their planning and management responsibilities. Many department heads, however, pointed out their problems in balancing faculty, student and administrative demands; their lack of training for management tasks; and their personal conflicts with respect to discrepancies between academic and administrative role expectations. More specifically, one participant, in reacting to suggestions that academic departments should be more market-oriented, said he could support this "but in a selective way. It's a question of looking at what areas we are good at and promoting them" (p. 28). Additionally, another participant noted that to implement changes, chairpersons must have faculty support and suggested that

> the real problem is that the department chairmen's role is regarded as protective of a unit when, in fact, the chairmen are being called on in the institutional context to reduce budgets and make hard decisions about filling and cutting faculty positions (p. 28).

In summary, the strategic planning literature suggests that academic department/division heads' participation is a critical factor in its effectiveness in higher education institutions but devotes only minimal attention to considering if and how such involvement will occur. The literature on the roles of department/division heads, however, describes a number of factors (for example, the complexity and ambiguity of their roles and responsibilities, the faculty and disciplinary training of most incumbents, prevailing faculty and departmental/divisional orientations and concerns) that may limit their cooperation in conducting strategic planning processes and/or in implementing strategic decisions. Thus, in considering the potential usefulness of strategic planning in colleges and universities, there is a need to examine more closely the department/division heads' predispositions and behaviors with respect to institutional planning in general and to strategic planning in particular.

Corporate Experience with Strategic Planning. A serious challenge to strategic planning in general, and to assumptions that academic unit heads will endorse and work toward the success of strategic planning in particular, emerges from an examination of its effectiveness in the corporate world in which it was initially developed (Cover Story, 1984). This examination found that of 33 company strategies described in Business Week in 1979 and 1980, only 14 could be considered successful by fall 1984. The article also indicated that, despite original intentions, in these companies strategic planning often became a quantitative and rigid process, which was strongly resisted by operating

managers. According to the authors of the Business Week article, "a 'natural resistance' that escalated into out-and-out hostility meant that even when the planners were right, operating managers often would not listen to them" (p. 65). Although this article suggests that the strategic planning processes used in these companies were far more inflexible and apolitical than those now being recommended for higher education institutions, it does substantiate many of the questions and concerns about strategic planning that are discussed or suggested by the literature.

There are other critiques of strategic planning in the literature on business. Rowe (1974) questioned the assumption of the "rational decision maker underlying most planning approaches." He set forth the rule that "in any complex decision where personal or behavioral factors apply, the individual's preference will dominate the results." Hunsicker (1980), in an article entitled "The Malaise of Strategic Planning," stated that,

> Many top managers have begun to question the value added by increasingly time-consuming and sophisticated strategic planning processes. "We spend an awful lot of time and effort on strategic planning" one executive complained recently, "but I find it hard to point to a clear case where our business is really better of or even substantially different for it" (p. 9).

He suggested that strategic planning processes lead to "tunnel vision" because planning assumptions tend to be accepted as "eternal truths." The processes of advancing ideas through the planning process is intimidating and suppresses new ideas, and quantitative analyses can confirm, but do not help develop hypotheses--they come from hunch, intuition, judgment and experience.

Hayes (1985) asserted that strategic planning's assumptions about business decisionmaking are completely backward from the reality. As a result, "the methodology of formal strategic planning and, even worse, the organizational attitudes and relationships that it often cultivates can impair a company's ability to compete." Companies do not start with goals and then devise means. When goals are set they frequently are too short term. Long-term goals tend to be too inaccurate. Plans once written can tend to take on a life of their own and be too inflexible.

Taking another tack, De Geus (1988), head of planning for Royal Dutch/Shell Group, said planning must be seen as learning. Changes grow out of a company's knowledge of itself and its environment. The starting point for planning must be the "mental model that the audience has at the moment. Teams that have to cope with rigid procedures and information systems will learn

more slowly than those with flexible, open communication channels" (p. 74).

Acker (1988), chairperson of IBM, commenting on his company's experience with strategic planning, stated, "There was not as much value-added from corporate HQ [headquarters] as the time spent to see if you would get that value" (p. 95). Benveniste (1972) pointed out that

> planning distorts organizational goals or accentuates goal conflict. It distorts goals when easy-to-measure target outputs replace more important but hard-to-measure outcomes. It accentuates goal conflict when vague goals everyone agrees with are replaced by specific targets. It can also create new avenues of corruption, not only because planning reveals facts that need to be hidden, but also because the facts can be falsified if rewards are related to goal attainment. Moreover, undesirable consequences of this kind can result in the demise of planning, the ultimate planning cost at least from the point of view of the planner (p. 175).

Alternative to Institution-Wide Planning

Suggested alternatives for higher education planning partially reflect questions about the validity of the organizational goals concept (Vickers 1965; Georgiou 1973) and about assumptions that systematic analysis is the primary basis for decisionmaking. These alternatives include political advocacy and incremental models (Lindbolm 1959; Baldridge 1971), intentional planning (Benveniste 1972) and pluralistic, unit-based processes (Zemsky, Porter and Odell 1977). The political and incremental approaches emphasize issues relevant to institutional interest groups, rely on bargaining and negotiation to reach decisions, and favor marginal adaptation rather than major change. Although these approaches appear to be consistent with many of the currently accepted realities of higher education institutions, it has been suggested that they may result in a lack of an overall "sense of direction" and that, if accepted as a means for decisionmaking, implementation and evaluation of plans may be difficult (Peterson, 1980). In the unit-based approaches suggested by Cohen and March's (1974) notion of academic institutions as "organized anarchies," central coordination is minimal and primarily is concerned with monitoring external trends, unit needs and progress. Essentially, these approaches assume that overall institutional health and progress will result from each subunit achieving its maximum capability, perhaps, through informal means of coordination. Unit-oriented planning, however, may result in suboptimization from an institution-wide perspective, because it

pays little attention to the potentially positive effects of formally coordinated unit efforts. Cyert (1988) noted that

> the planning that works best is shaped to a great extent by the faculty in a department. However, no planning would take place at all without the discipline imposed on the organization from the central administration (p. 97).

There have been observations that unit-oriented planning may be based on faulty assumptions regarding the independence of units and that it may allow slow or inadequate unit planning to negatively affect the whole institution (Peterson 1980). Furthermore, past experiences with planning and new understandings of the way academic institutions operate do indicate that there are major problems in achieving the coordination of subunit and individual efforts that are critical to effective institutional-level planning (Cyert 1988). Thus, even in the late 1980s, scholars and practitioners continue to propose and experiment with new approaches to planning.

Implications and Conclusions

This examination of higher education planning raises a number of general questions about the character of appropriate and feasible planning processes. Are there basic flaws in current conceptions of planning? How well do current formulations of planning accommodate the characteristics of higher education? What are the particular characteristics of institutions that inhibit or facilitate planning? If planning designs and practices are incompatible with current characteristics of institutions, does the fault lie with the conceptions of planning or with the character of institutions? More specifically, is planning a distinct organizational function? Are the organizational assumptions underlying planning accurate? Are assumptions about the location of institutional power accurate? Should planning approaches vary according to institutional circumstances? Can planning help reconcile the need for collective action with the values of professional autonomy? Should planning seek to promote control or organizational learning? Can planning and operational decision-making be linked? Do the costs and constraints of planning justify its benefits? Can the success of planning processes be fairly judged? What motivates interest in planning, given its mixed success?

Definitive answers to these and other questions require further research into how planning processes actually perform at institutions of higher education. This review, however, provides some insight and observations regarding some of these concerns.

Is Planning a Distinct Organizational Function?

Some writers suggest that planning pervades nearly all aspects of organizational decisionmaking and, therefore, is not a separately identifiable process (Wildavsky 1973). Planning generally is defined as including formal attempts by individuals and organizations to systematically assemble and assess information that will provide them with clues about the circumstances they likely will confront, and the development of adaptations that will help them either to better meet new circumstances or to create interventions that will alter events in their favor. Planning thus involves a great deal of what goes on in organizations. Nearly all definitions of planning lack clear distinctions between functions specifically composing planning and those related to other organizational activities (Cope 1987).

Attempts, therefore, to design planning structures and processes that treat planning as a distinct function conducted through a specific process are unlikely to be successful. This is especially true when planning processes are established apart from the usual organizational decision processes. Planning either implicitly or explicitly pervades much of the decision-making taking place in organizations. If this conception of planning is correct, visions of simple prescriptions for effective planning may be mirages. In practice, planning may not be a distinct organizational function but may be imbedded in all parts of the overall governance of institutions.

Are Organizational Assumptions Underlying Planning Accurate?

A frequent criticism of planning is that it is based on the "rational actor" theory of organizational behavior described earlier. Most organizational theorists today believe this theory, at best, accounts for only a portion of the ways in which decisions are made in organizations (Cohen, March and Olsen 1972; Benveniste 1972; Schmidtlein 1973; Weick 1976; Birnbaum 1988). Some planning theorists, however, contend that planning processes are not necessarily linked to "rational" management concepts (Keller 1983). They believe processes can be designed that are compatible with political and incremental theories of organizational decisionmaking. In fact, a few suggest that current concepts of strategic planning represent such an adaptation of earlier planning concepts (Cope 1987; Keller 1983). More research is needed on the actual decision processes utilized in institutions and the extent these processes are compatible with various prescriptions for formal planning.

Are Assumptions About the Location of Institutional Power Accurate?

Still another criticism of planning concerns assumptions made about the location of decisionmaking power in an organization. Often descriptions of planning processes imply that centrally located officials will be responsible for making value judgments and critical choices on the contents of plans and for implementing results. In democratic societies, organizations typically contain systems of checks and balances that restrict the accumulation of excessive power by central officials, thereby preventing them from imposing their values on others (Ostrom 1974). An uneasy balance is sought between assigning to central officials sufficient power to permit their taking collective actions that benefit the entire institution and diffusing power sufficiently to preserve values held by minority interests, avoid official orthodoxy and prevent organization-wide adoption of transitory fads. Variety and experimentation is considered to be an important attribute of a democratic society. The concern with diffusing power is a particularly sensitive issue in higher education, because it helps shape core cultural and social values of our youths and thus should not be unduly influenced by official points of view. In performing this function, dissent and critique are highly valued as ways of helping individuals form their own opinions.

Furthermore, distributions of power found in institutions result from the interplay of complex factors over considerable periods of time. A planning process that either implicitly or explicitly assumes a redistribution of power within an institution is likely to encounter considerable opposition (Benveniste 1972). In addition to the usual dispersions of power in organizations, the core staff of higher education institutions comprises professionals. The expertise to make many kinds of decisions rests with faculty who are at the bottom of the organizational pyramid. Planning processes that do not recognize these norms of professional autonomy are likely to be unsuccessful. Perhaps effective higher education planning processes can be designed that take the aforementioned circumstances into consideration. Many of the early designs described in the literature did not appear to fully recognize these realities.

Should Planning Approaches Vary According to Institutional Circumstances?

There are suggestions in the literature that processes of planning that are effective when resources are increasing might not be effective when resources are decreasing (Cyert 1978). Institutions enjoying favorable circumstances might not have strong incentives to plan, or their planning would be concerned primarily with dividing up new increments of resources. In

contrast, institutions with decreasing resources have a strong incentive to plan to determine the priority of cuts. Experience indicates, however, that units within institutions are likely to resist planning that leads to decreasing their resources. This observation suggests that planning may have to be more centralized and emphasize control, more than "learning," during times of retrenchment.

The literature also includes many comments on the necessity of adapting planning processes to the culture and traditions of institutions (Allen and Chaffee 1981; Baldridge and Okimini 1982; Gillis 1982; Keller 1983). This implies that there are few, if any, planning models that can be applied generally to institutions. In other words, each institution has to "hand craft" its own approach. There undoubtedly are general planning principles but these principles are likely to require very different approaches in different settings.

Some authors, viewing the apparent mismatch between planning prescriptions and campus realities, appear to suggest that the fault lies with institutions when their prescribed planning process fails. They imply an institution lacks leadership, planning expertise or vision if it fails to successfully utilize recommended processes. The majority of authors, however, appear to believe the chances are small that an institution will alter its basic character. They assume institutional incentives and disincentives change slowly and human behavior in organizations is not easy to alter (Etzioni 1972). Therefore, planning processes must conform to institutional characteristics. Institutions are not likely to alter their ways to accommodate a prescribed planning process.

Can Planning Help Reconcile the Need for Collective Action With the Values of Professional Autonomy?

Institutions need to take coherent actions to define their character and the directions in which they wish to proceed. This need is one of the principal rationales for undertaking planning. Planning seeks to identify courses of action that are in the collective interests of an institution and to implement policies and procedures to achieve those ends. As several authors (Wildavsky 1973; Mandelbaum 1979) point out, however, there is no rational way to determine what constitutes the collective best interests of an institution. Obtaining an appropriate balance between collective interests, while preserving the values of professional autonomy and local initiative, appears to be a highly political process (Benveniste 1972). The experiences described in the literature suggest that planning is one of many ingredients in that basic organizational conflict. It may help define what constitutes the collective interest but is only one of many factors that influence, and are utilized to implement,

particular definitions of what constitutes the collective interest.

Should Planning Seek to Promote Control or Institutional Learning?

Some view planning as a means for exercising control over fragmented, semiautonomous campus units. Others view planning more as a means to promote institutional learning (De Geus 1988). The first approach appears to assume that plans will provide clear institutional directions and that those in authority will have the power to ensure, through leadership, conformance with organizational plans. The second approach appears to recognize some validity in the old adage "one who is persuaded against [his or her] will is of the same opinion still." Consequently, proponents of this approach view planning as a means for providing organizational constituencies with common information, helping them gain a broad understanding of circumstances and achieving informed support for proposed courses of action. The focus is on gaining voluntary compliance through promoting better understanding of individual and collective interests and purposes, rather than using various forms of power to gain acceptance. This latter approach appears better suited to the circumstances of higher education, but obviously there are situations where basic disagreements over courses of action will exist and exercises of power are needed to safeguard institution-wide interests.

Can Planning and Operational Decisionmaking Be Linked?

Most of the literature suggests that planning should be closely linked to operational decisions. There is, however, considerable evidence in the literature that this has been difficult to achieve. When the implementation of plans confronts hard operational decisions, the political processes that settle such issues take over and plans become only one ingredient in the conflict. An old military adage may be applicable in these circumstances: "When the fighting begins the battle plan ends." There is, however, some evidence that plans provide context and common assumptions for operational decisions. More research is needed on the factors that affect the interface between plans and their operational consequences. The comments of Davies (1989) on the character of higher education seem pertinent in this respect:

> Ours is a business of sailing ships, not ships of steam. The wind and the waves are always variables you have to deal with when you are getting from here to there. And if that means you tack back and forth, you are not being taken off course, you are dealing with the reality of the environment in which you are placed. These things are the reality within which we have to do what we want to do (p. 10).

Do the Costs and Constraints of Planning Justify Its Benefits?

There is general agreement in the literature that institutions need to set aside time periodically to free staff from their day-to-day activities so they can systematically examine their environment and their current circumstances and then, when indicated, revise their strategies and programs. Disagreement arises over the elaborateness, flexibility and frequency of formal attempts seeking to accomplish these purposes. The experience revealed in the literature suggests that, even with the data and technologies available today, predictions contained in plans frequently are inaccurate. One's modest ability to predict future circumstances implies that institutions need to carefully assess the potential values of formal planning processes against their costs (Benveniste 1972). A balance needs to be achieved between the time and resources devoted to planning and that devoted to efforts to maintain the flexibility required for entrepreneurship and opportunism. Some authors suggest that complex and overly rigid formal planning processes may raise the costs of introducing new ideas in a timely manner and do not provide value for money (Miller and Miller 1988).

Can the Success of Planning Processes Be Judged Fairly?

Planning theorists suggest that judging the success of institutional planning is a very complex task (Mandelbaum 1979). Institutions rarely have clear objectives against which their success can be measured (Benveniste 1972). Goal-oriented decision processes may not describe how decisions actually are made in organizations (Vickers 1965; Georgiou 1973). In addition, there are many intervening variables that affect the success of institutions, clouding the effects that might be attributed to a planning process. Because there has been little research on actual institutional planning practices, the assessment of their effectiveness remains an open question.

What Motivates Interest in Planning Given Its Mixed Success?

Obviously some circumstances are predictable and institutions should be aware of trends and attempt to assess their implications. Even clearly documented trends, however, such as the decline in birth rates after the post-war baby boom, do not clearly foretell what is to come. As higher education discovered, total enrollments did not decline in the 1980s, as was widely predicted, and the effects of the decline in birth rates were quite different for various types of institutions in different parts of the country.

The purported success of planning in the business world also appears to have promoted its application in higher education. Evidence noted earlier, however, that the roots of highly

structured formal planning in the business world appear to be in some degree of decay, may have implications for its continued acceptance in higher education.

The current enthusiasm for planning appears somewhat disproportionate to the benefits described in the literature. Wildavsky suggests that this may result from human's age old search for means to predict and control their future. People still go to palm readers. Recently the legitimacy of astrology got a boost from high office. Perhaps, in our modern technological world, planning techniques are performing some of the ancient functions of activities, such as examinations of entrails, as a means to foresee and adapt to future circumstances. Planners may serve, to some extent, as modern counterparts to the oracle and crystal ball gazer.

This review of selected literature reveals a lack of both consistent theoretical frameworks and clear empirical evidence to support an uncritical acceptance of existing formal planning approaches. Current conceptions of organizational behavior, particularly in colleges and universities, stress their loosely coupled, decentralized character. Decisionmaking is characterized as incremental and political with considerable value placed on professional autonomy. In contrast, most available planning approaches are rooted in "rational" and bureaucratic conceptions of decisionmaking and organizational structure. Furthermore, most books and articles prescribe planning processes, and make recommendations on how institutions should plan, with little empirical evidence to support their claims. The literature on planning contains little research on the consequences of planning processes, particularly those that have been in operation for two or more years. Even the few existing empirical examinations of actual planning experiences often are somewhat superficial. They generally have involved surveys or selective case studies rather than indepth research on a broad spectrum of campuses. Moreover, they rarely examine experience over time. In addition, there is very little discussion of the differential effects of processes that are mandated by external agencies in contrast to those emerging from within institutions. Given the millions of dollars that institutions appear to be spending on planning, clearly it is a subject warranting more study. Until such studies are completed, campuses considering the use of a formal planning process should recognize the uneven performance of past institutional efforts and try to determine whether recommended approaches are consistent with their own values and characteristics.

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